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Fig. 3 shows a plot of the concentration of the aqueous phase vs. temperature.

Fig. 4 shows an example where no O/W emulsifier is initially present (coordinate L_1) and when the system is brought to coordinate L_2 and L_3 by raising the temperature.----------

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute claims 1-3 with amended claims 1-3

1. Transparent or translucent microemulsions of the oil-in-water type

   - comprising ≤ 11.8% by weight of an oil phase, composed essentially of constituents of low volatility, and an aqueous phase
   - containing:

     one or more polyethoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polyethoxylated and polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers,

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   - and optionally one or more W/O emulsifiers,
   - having an emulsifier content of less than 20% by weight, based on the total weight of the emulsion,
   - and obtainable by a process in which a mixture of the base components, comprising the aqueous phase, the oil phase, one or more of the O/W emulsifiers according to the invention, optionally one or more W/O emulsifiers, and optionally other auxiliary substances, additives and/or active substances, is brought to a temperature within or above the phase inversion temperature range and then cooled to room temperature.

2. A process for the preparation of transparent or translucent O/W microemulsions

which comprise:

(1) an aqueous phase with optional substances soluble or dispersible in water,

(2) an oil phase comprising constituents of low volatility and optional substances soluble or dispersible in the oil phase,

(3) one or more polyethoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polyethoxylated and polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers, and

(4) optionally one or more W/O emulsifiers,

which process comprises

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(a) the initial concentrations of the oil phase, the aqueous phase and, optionally one or more W/O emulsifiers are chosen and these constituents are added to one another to form a mixture,

(b) the initial concentration of the O/W emulsifier or emulsifiers, which may also be equal to zero, is chosen and this O/W emulsifier or these O/W emulsifiers are added to the mixture obtained in (a),

(c) the mixture obtained in (b) having a starting temperature, and

(d) the mixture obtained in (b) by appropriate variation of at least one parameter selected from the group comprising the temperature and the concentration or concentrations of at least one of the chosen emulsifiers and/or of the oil phase and/or of the aqueous phase, and the mixture formed passes through the phase inversion region between W/O emulsions

and O/W emulsions and is brought into the region where the mixture exists as an O/W emulsion or O/W microemulsion.

3. A process for the preparation of transparent or translucent O/W microemulsions according to Claim 1, which process comprises a mixture of the base components, comprising the aqueous phase, the oil phase, one or more of the O/W emulsifiers, optionally one or more W/O emulsifiers,
and optionally other auxiliary substances, additives and/or active substances
which form an O/W emulsion below the phase inversion temperature range,
is brought to a temperature

- at which the components soluble in the oil phase dissolve or are at least in the molten state,
- which corresponds at least to the melting point of the highest-melting oil component not present in the dissolved state,
- and which is below the phase inversion temperature range of the system,

and the resulting O/W emulsion is then cooled to room temperature to form an O/W microemulsion.

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

If entry and consideration of the amendments above requires an extension of time, Applicants respectfully request that this be considered a petition therefor. The Assistant Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee(s) due in this connection to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.